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FORT ERIE/ PORT COLBORNE/ RIDGWAY

Port Erie Secondary
7 Tait Avenue, Fort Erie
fess.dsbm.org

Monday, January 13
6:30 p.m.

Port Colborne High
211 Elgin St., Port Colborne
porthigh.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 9
6:00 p.m.

Ridgway-Crystal Beach High
576 Ridge Rd., Ridgway
ridgwayhs.dsbm.org

Monday, January 13
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

GRIMSBY/LINCOLN

Beamsville District Secondary
4317 Central Avenue, Beamsville
beamsvilles.dsbm.org

Wednesday, January 15
6:30 p.m.

Grimsbys Secondary
5 Boulton Avenue, Grimsby
grimsbyhs.dsbm.org

Tuesday, January 14
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

South Lincoln High
260 Canborough Street, Smithville
southlincoln.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 16
6:30 p.m.

NIAGARA FALLS

A. N. Myer Secondary
6338 O'Neil Street, Niagara Falls
anmyer.dsbm.org

Wednesday, January 15
6:30 p.m.

Stamford Collegiate Secondary
5775 Drummond Rd., Niagara Falls
stamford.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 16
6:30 p.m.

Westlane Secondary
5960 Pitton Rd., Niagara Falls
westlane.dsbm.org

Wednesday, January 15
6:30 p.m.

ST. CATHARINES

Eden High
535 Lake St., St. Catharines
eden.dsbm.org

Monday, January 13
6:30 p.m.

Governor Simcoe Secondary
15 Glenview Ave., St. Catharines
govsimcoe.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 16
6:30 p.m.

Laura Secord Secondary
349 Niagara Street, St. Catharines
laurasecord.org

Tuesday, January 14
6:30 p.m.

Sir Winston Churchill Secondary
101 Glen Morris Dr., St. Catharines
sirwinston.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 16
6:30 p.m.

St. Catharines Collegiate Secondary
34 Catherine Street, St. Catharines
collegiate.dsbm.org

Wednesday, January 15
6:00 p.m.

WELLAND/FONTHILL/ THOROLD

Eastdale Secondary
170 Wellington St., Welland
eastdale.dsbm.org

Thursday, January 16
7:00 p.m.

E. L. Crossley Secondary
350 Highway #20, Fonthill
elcrossley.dsbm.org

Tuesday, January 14
6:30 p.m.

Thorold Secondary
50 Ormond St. N., Thorold
ts.dsbm.org

Tuesday, January 14
6:30 p.m.

Welland Centennial Secondary
240 Thorold Rd. West, Welland
centennial.dsbm.org

Wednesday, January 15
6:30 p.m.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2013

A Splash of Fun

Port Colborne levee
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Police want more; some question cost
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INPORT NEWS



SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 2 VOLUME 18

For news updated daily see www.inportnews.ca

ENVIRONMENT

ALLAN BENNER/
STAFF PHOTO

Greenpeace activist Paul Ruzycy is back in his hometown of Port Colborne after spending the past three months detained in Russia.



International attention for Port man

ALLAN BENNER
QMI Agency Niagara

In 25 years working with Greenpeace, Paul Ruzycy said he has never seen as much international attention focused on the organization.

The 48-year-old Port Colborne resident returned home Friday after 99 days in Russia. He was one of 30 Greenpeace activists, including Montreuil Alexandre Paul, who arrested Sept. 18 for boarding the oil rig *Pirazlomnaya* in the Pechora Sea, while protesting arctic oil exploration.

See HOME on Page 2

HometownRealEstateGuy.com

Michael Smith
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

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CALLS

HOME

Ruzyski celebrates his homecoming

From Page 1
 "We weren't protesting Russia or the Russian people. We were protesting the exploration of the oil in the Arctic. It could have been Norway, Denmark or even Canada or the U.S. if they were doing the same."

He said it was a long frightening ordeal, but because of their arrest the story became international news.

"It blew the story up and it went global. I have friends all over the world, and everyone was sending messages of support," he said. "In hindsight I would say it was worth it because of the international attention we got on the Arctic and the oil exploration - and exploitation - that's happening there."

A lot of people had no idea about it, and then when 30 people are locked up for a month, and then it's two months. They're starting to get interested maybe and start following the story."

He said the attention made people wonder why their ship was seized and why they were arrested, and he hopes as a result people learned more about the cause that brought the activists to that oil platform in the first place.

From an environmental perspective, he said, there is no reason to have oil reserves than the world can afford to burn without causing irreversible damage to the climate.

"There's no logic in looking for more oil, especially in the Arctic. It's such a pristine area, and there's no way of cleaning up an oil spill if I'll say when it happens now that they're actually pumping oil from that platform. It's just a matter of time. Where ever there's oil, there's a spill somewhere," he said.

There's already viable alternatives like renewable energy. We have to make the transition before it's too late. The technology is there. It's just a matter of getting the people to force the governments to do it."

Ruzyski hopes that his time in Russia might have helped "put a spin" on the international eye, saying it is possible to

change."

Ruzyski was on the bridge of the *Arctic Sunrise* on Wednesday, Sept. 18, navigating the ship out of the international waters as the Russian coast guard fired warning shots across her bow.

"We were doing two or three knots, just moving very slowly, and I saw the helicopter coming in at full speed," Ruzyski said. "The ropes came down and people from the crew started coming out to see what the commotion was. These guys rappelled down with full commando outfits on, balalaikas and assault rifles and pistols. They ordered the crew to kneel on the deck. Of course, you comply when someone's pointing a weapon at you."

He said the ship was boarded by the Spetsnaz, Russia's version of the U.S. Navy Seals.

"It was an intimidation tactic. They know we're non-violent, we don't carry any weapons," he said. "We were an easy target for them, like a training exercise really."

The *Arctic Sunrise* was towed to port and the crew was arrested, initially facing charges of piracy that were later reduced to hooliganism. It was a terrifying experience, followed by about two months imprisoned in a jail in Murmansk. They were later transferred to a detention centre in St. Petersburg before being released on bail.

It was pretty sad conditions it was an old jail."

He described it as a cinderblock cell, furnished with a steel frame bed covered by a thin mattress. He said a typical Canadian jail cell might seem like a nice hotel in comparison to his accommodations.

The guards, however, treated him "fairly and with respect."

"They did not push me around or yell at me or anything like that."

At first Ruzyski thought he'd be released after a few days. But his hopes were dashed when the prisoners received the first of many cake packages from Greenpeace International. They received enough provisions to last them a week,

much longer than Ruzyski hoped to be there.

"We had our liberties and our freedom taken away. We were forced into a prison cell for two months. In the grand scheme of things, it's not a long time but it's still two months of detention."

Ruzyski didn't know hunger strikes would in the Russian jails, protesting the watery fish soup that the guards were serving to the vegetarian.

"It was a personal hunger strike. The food wasn't very appealing."

Despite fresh fruit and vegetables in the Greenpeace cake packages, Ruzyski chose not to eat all. He went without food for the first seven days after being imprisoned in Murmansk.

"It was more of a flight-or-fight thing, I didn't know what was going on, and I figured it wasn't going to last," he said. "When we were transferred to St. Petersburg I did another five days just as a personal protest. I wasn't bragging about it. ... My roommates in St. Petersburg couldn't believe it. They were telling me to eat, and I said, 'Nyet, nyet, I'm OK.'"

Even when the activists were released on bail, free to roam the streets of St. Petersburg, Ruzyski still felt like a prisoner, unable to leave Russia until the activists were finally granted amnesty last week.

It was the 20th anniversary of Amnesty Day, and Russian President Vladimir Putin granting amnesty to more people than usual.

"I think that may have been related to the upcoming Olympics, because they wanted to show that Russia is a good country," Ruzyski said.

After being welcomed home by friends and family Friday evening, Ruzyski spent the past few days recuperating. On Tuesday, he drove downtown to meet some of the people who supported him during his ordeal.

Ruzyski smiled as he pushed open the door of a downtown shop. "I heard you were looking for a criminal," he said, laugh-

ing as walked inside a store and introduced himself to the business owner.

His pictures were displayed in the store window during the Christmas decorations, one of several downtown shops that displayed photographs of Ruzyski in a show of support.

Ruzyski said it was that kind of support that helped him endure his time in Russia.

"It was an amazing. It reinforced that there were so many people in the community who are supporting me," he said, referring to a vigil held by the community as well as dozens of letters from friends and family.

He said the support of Greenpeace International also kept his hopes up.

"I knew they were going to be backing us," he said. "I've been with them for 25 years traveling around the planet. There are 50 countries I've visited, and I know that Greenpeace has my back."

When the arrest occurred, he said the whole organization stopped for a moment and recalibrated its direction.

"Everything was focused on getting us out of jail."

Other agencies, including the International Maritime Organization, also supported the activists, he said.

The Canadian government showed its support too through the Canadian Consular Service.

"I'm still thanking them, they're still helping me get my belongings back. They've been stellar, their performance."

He said representatives from the consular service attended all his court appearances as an observer.

Currently, Greenpeace is continuing to fight a legal battle for the return of the *Arctic Sunrise*.

"We want to get our ship back, that's a huge priority," he said.

Ruzyski plans to return to Greenpeace, possibly shipping out in the summer on another assignment.

But he said he won't return to Russia - ever.

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ENVIRONMENT

No ticker-tape for Ruzyski

ALLAN BONNER
 (ML Agency Niagara)

Paul Ruzyski won't get a ticker-tape parade.

He doesn't want one. "No, that's polluting," the Greenpeace activist said when the idea was suggested.

Nevertheless, people in his hometown are still gearing up to celebrate the return of the 48-year-old who arrived in Port Colborne Friday after more than three months detained in Russia.

"For what I've been doing I never expected any recognition or asked for it," said Ruzyski.

"But it's overwhelming to feel the support. It's great. All these people I went to high school with who showed up at a rally and people I don't even know."

Mayor Vance Badawey laughed at the suggestion of a ticker-tape parade, but said a community celebration of some sort is warranted.

"Once Paul gets his feet back on the ground here in the community, and we have a chance to talk to the family, I'm sure we'll have some sort of reception," he said. "I haven't had a chance to talk to Paul or the family yet... to see what their intentions are, but, of course, as a community we'd be more than happy to be a part of any celebration that they want to put on."

Badawey said he kept in touch through e-mail while Ruzyski was in Russia.

In one of his e-mails,

he said Ruzyski apologized for missing environmental committee meetings.

"He said 'I'll make sure I get a note,' Badawey said, laughing. "In all seriousness, we're all extremely happy that Paul's back home."

Though Port Colborne artist Kelly Langley Davies has never met Ruzyski, she said his story was so inspiring that she wanted to get involved. Davies said contacted Paul's sister Patti Stirling, discussing ideas about how to celebrate Ruzyski's return.

She said she was inspired by a picture that Stirling posted on the internet of Ruzyski holding a light and a life-preserver.

"The phrase 'Shine a light' came to me. I pictured how nice it would be to have him come down along the canal, with the association with the water and all of that sort of thing, and have people carrying lights along the way."

But no plans have been finalized yet, Davies said. Davies laughed about the window display, which included pictures of Ruzyski on female mannequins with skirts made from evergreen boughs. The words "home at last" are written on the display.

"It's good to have something light related to the topic of something that was quite horrific," she said.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **2014:** Health care, jobs remain priority at Port Colborne levee

A splash of fun at levee

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

While the mayor and councillors played supporting roles at Port Colborne's annual new year levee, the star of the show seemed to be the Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

Families came in droves on Sunday to swim, skate and participate in other on site activities, stopping to occasionally enjoy a cookie and chat with the city's elected officials.

The smiles all around created a stark contrast to last year's levee, prior to the opening of the centre, when many "naysayers" expressed opposition to the \$32-million building, said Ward 2 Coun. Yvon Doucet.

"Today, all I've been hearing is about how great this facility is," he said, even from those who previously opposed the build.

"It's a completely different feel to last year. There are people who didn't want this facility who now use it on a daily basis," Doucet said.

"People tell me a lot that they're grateful we stuck with it even though there were negative vibes. Now they see Port Colborne is one of the luckiest cities in the area because of what we have here."

The decision was made

“
This is what it's all about.”

Mayor Vance Badawey

to have the levee at the centre because it is always bustling with activity, said Mayor Vance Badawey.

"This is what it's all about," he said of the busy facility.

"This just shows how community can work together toward our common goals."

After seeing construction of the Vale centre and the Algonquin Skate and BMX Park in 2013, the city is going to continue moving forward and "getting it done in 2014," Badawey said.

Health care remains the city's No. 1 priority, he said, as well as infrastructure and jobs.

Though he would not provide further detail, Badawey said there are two companies planning to set up in Port Colborne.

"They're both coming, it's just a matter of when," he said.

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MARYANNE FIRTH/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Ariane Sneek tosses daughter Karina in the water at the Vale Health and Wellness Centre. With her other daughter Ava, right, the trio shared a lot of laughs in the centre's pool Sunday during the annual New Year's levee hosted by the City of Port Colborne.

■ **COMMUNITY:** Citizens asked to share concerns, feedback

Wainfleet levee links council, residents

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

It was a chance for Wainfleet residents to get up close and personal with the leaders of their community — an opportunity Ross and Debbie Bell weren't about to pass up.

The couple made their way to Wainfleet arena on Saturday for the annual new year

levee hosted by township council.

They were eager to meet with Mayor April Jeffs and township aldermen to discuss an ongoing traffic issue they've had by their home. By speaking with elected officials face-to-face, they hoped the message would resonate that heavy truck traffic on Phillips Rd. needs to be

addressed.

That direct communication is the intention of the levee, Jeffs said, as it allows council to learn more about concerns in the community and gain feedback from its residents.

"It's an opportunity for them to ask us questions about the future and to offer input on what they want to see happen," she said.

Families were also given the chance to skate for free. Aid. Betty Konec was hoping to see a few more faces at the event, which drew about 50 people.

"We need to hear from the taxpayers," she said.

"If you're pissed at us, we need to hear that. If you're pleased with what we're doing, we need to hear that,

too," she said.

Of those who did attend Saturday, many spoke about council's Dec. 10 decision to pay Skydive Burnaby's \$40,000 legal bill in the fight against a wind turbine development, Konec said.

"Turbines, turbines, turbines. That's what's on most people's minds."

Ald. Ted Hessels, who

voted against the controversial decision, was expecting to see more people at the arena voicing their opinion on the subject.

He suspects more will be heard from the public at council's upcoming Jan. 14 meeting.

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IMPORT NEWS

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■ ourview

The seemingly unsinkable Mayor Rob Ford

How the heck are his enemies going to beat this guy?

The media polls on Day 1 of the Toronto 2014 election show the one sure thing is that Toronto Mayor Rob Ford is the man to beat.

One torontojournal.com poll certainly indicates this.

Question: "Of those who want their intention to run public, who would you vote for in the 2014 municipal election?"

Rob Ford: 53%

Karen Simola: 42%

David Sokolacki: 5%

There's a poll on Sun News

Network's website:

Question: "Election season kicks in in Toronto. Think you as candidates are eligible to register for October's municipal vote. How likely is Mayor Rob Ford to win another term?"

Very likely: 49%

Likely: 33%

Unlikely: 10%

Not a chance: 6%

And then there's Newstalk 1010:

Question: "Are you considering for Rob Ford in the next municipal election?"

Yes: 50.4%

I haven't decided: 3.6%

None of the three polls are scientific, but they are still interesting.

They don't have other possible big name candidates listed, such as Denzil Minna-Wong, Norm Kelly, Olivia Chow or John Tory, so they are hardly bankable.

Those who just discount them as irrelevant are generally the same ones who have missed the whole Ford saga since Day 1.

These polls would matter

to Ford's opponents had they showed him fading terribly.

Instead, these polls all send one message loud and clear.

The actions to make Mayor Ford irrelevant, by his enemies and even all by himself, have not panned out as well as many would think they should have.

There is not the arduous toward the apologetic mayor that a group of well-organized Toronto elites would have people believe.

No question Mayor Ford has a good number of people who want him gone.

But Ford also has his supporters.

And they are not embarrassed to admit it no matter who sends out letters saying they should be.

So what are they going to do?

Nothing in the Sun on Ford has worked so far. Plan A, to name, embarrass and/or

drive Mayor Rob Ford out of office and into oblivion has not resonated.

The backdoor Toronto-mayor-decides have more piling on to do.

Meanwhile, there was the big man, down 30 pounds in weight, on Jan. 2, as promised, with his \$200 and registration to run for mayor again in the Oct. 27 vote.

Most would have been political road kill. Ford's survival skills have proven to be exceptional.

Remarkable, actually.

Not many could gain points in the polls, or at least maintain their approval rating, following an admission to smoking crack cocaine.

Imagine what the poll numbers would have been had none of that happened.

jeawarnington@sunmedia.ca

LHN's idea of transparency is a disgrace

We're a funny bunch, we Canadians, aren't we?

Year after year, surveys show we hold our universal health-care system as sacrosanct. At the same time, I am hard pressed to think of something we complain about more.

Perhaps it is because our health-care system is so important that we are often so critical of it, but the truth is that in our anger and anger we often freak out over the wrong things.

I mean, if the Niagara Health System changes its parking fees, everyone loses their minds. Some people start frothing at the mouth, suggesting that unless they get free parking in the hospital lobby, patients will die horrible gruesome deaths.

For all the walling and gnashing of teeth our local hospital system inspires — sometimes justified, sometimes not — as a community we remain woefully unaware of the weighty health-care decisions made in Grimsby by Niagara's Local Health Integration Network.

And at this point, if you want to get mad at something in the health-care system, it's the LHN.

I suspect for many of you the mere mention of the LHN causes your eyes to glaze over. Speaking the name itself feels like some kind of curse for insom-

nias. Most people seem unaware the LHN even exists.

And let's face it, when we get sick and frustrated, we tend to lash out at the closest target: doctors, nurses, clinics and hospitals. We don't direct the LHN decisions that have a direct and visceral impact on the services we receive. The LHN has no face. It didn't screw up that lab test, nor was it short with us at the doctor's office.

But the number of open beds in a hospital, patient flow, wait times in emergency departments, how many spaces are available in long-term care homes and a host of other important health-care issues are directly influenced by the LHN's decisions on how to fund health care in the region.

Still, I have yet to read a letter to the editor blasting the LHN.

And there should be plenty.

For all their influence and importance, Ontario's 14 LHNs operate in near darkness. We're only made aware of their decisions when they are good and ready to tell us.

My colleague Marlene Bergsma recently wrote a column describing her frustration at trying to get basic information from the Niagara LHN about the issues it is debating. The LHN's reports, which contain information the public and press should have

easy access to, are not released until six weeks after LHN members have already made a decision.

We don't get to see the data the LHN is using to make decisions that directly impact our lives.

Even if you personally attend a meeting, you won't get that information.

This is in complete contrast to every other important public body, from city council and regional council to the police services board, all of which provide their reports to anyone who asks at their meetings.

It goes beyond just not allowing the press and public access to public reports. Go to the LHNs' bare minimum websites and try to find your way around. It's like walking through a car wash blindfolded.

There is no consistency among LHNs about what gets shared, either. Want to know when the next LHN meeting is? One LHN might tell you, the next one won't. Our LHN has not posted its 2014 meeting schedule.

Want to know what was discussed at the last meeting? Good luck. Some LHNs post a "highlights of the last meeting" newsletter, but you won't see the reports from said meeting.

The LHN's secrecy is completely unacceptable, actively discourages public involvement and is a disgrace.

■ readers' views

NEW TREATIES NEEDED

Regarding the treaties signed more than 300 years ago that allow aboriginals to occasionally hand over the province: It was easy, then, for the "white man" to offer so much to the natives, but times have changed. They didn't own the country, they just rented it. Looking for food, they had to travel off to pay them, and their ancestors, rent for all eternity. The Canadian government gave them reservations to live on, plus monthly allowances. I know most people will not agree, but I think I have the right since my dad was grandson of the chief of one of the tribes, but he never lived on a reservation, nor accepted any money from the government. It's time, indeed, to update the treaties.

MARGE BROWNE
ST. CATHARINES

came to North America and took the country by force, natives had the run of the whole country. The Canadian and U.S. governments forced each tribe and band onto little patches of land that are nothing but ghettos in many cases. Their way of life was taken away from them and they basically receive welfare, which dooms them to that lifestyle. Learn a little history. However, you are right, we need to rethink the whole idea of reservations.

JOHN DUNN
STEVENSVILLE

IN DEFENCE OF NATUROPATHS

On Dec. 27 at 6 p.m., I called my naturopath on her cellphone because our four-year-old son's health had taken a turn for the worse. By 7:15 p.m., she had driven to her clinic from home and was doing an actual physical examination of our son's lungs, ears and throat. There were no cars in sight, and I didn't see any jars containing eye-of-newt in the corner. I could not read Grant LaFèche's Dec. 22 rant, therefore, and not respond. Not only does the rant belie his patent ignorance of naturopathy, it is also a showcase of

sloppy writing. For starters, he spends his time defacing his opening argument, which is that the Ontario government should not extend to naturopaths the power to "prescribe powerful drugs." He then goes on to talk about homopathy being nothing more than "rubbing a cat on your head to cure a migraine." In an effort to discredit naturopathy, he sets up the faulty dilemma that one has to either embrace conventional medicine or science, or reject it and embrace alternative medicine and fantasy. Believe it or not, it is common practice for doctors and pharmacists in places like Germany and Switzerland to prescribe and/or stock homeopathic remedies alongside pharmaceutical drugs without experiencing LaFèche's cognitive dissonance. There is an entire hospital in Switzerland that incorporates conventional and alternative medicine (including homopathy) in its care of patients. Either European doctors are all Hogwarts-trained quacks and wizards, or LaFèche's materialistic view of the world is too narrow.

DEBBIE TREIFZ
ST. CATHARINES

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **DONATIONS:** Funds can still be earmarked for specific communities

Hospital foundations continue local fundraising

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

"It's still business as usual."

That's the message Port Colborne Hospital Foundation chair Cindy Thorpe hoped to share with the community following the amalgamation of Niagara's hospital foundations.

While the groups have come together under the name One Foundation, local fundraising initiatives will continue, said Thorpe, who also acts as vice-chair on the amalgamated board.

"Any money raised in the community will stay in the commu-

nity," she said of Port Colborne, unless it is earmarked by the donor for another city or regional program.

The collaboration between the foundations is not meant to erase their individual identities, but to make fundraising at the regional level more effective, Thorpe said.

She felt it important to spread that message in south Niagara, particularly with local fundraising events getting underway in the new year.

Welland and Port Colborne hospital foundations have their annual Tim Hortons Elimination Dinner and Draw in January and

February, respectively.

"It's a good thing, the amalgamation, but we need to be reassuring people we're here for our community," Thorpe said.

"Our first priority is still the Port Colborne site."

Thorpe wanted to assure lake-side city residents that local fundraising initiatives will continue "full steam ahead."

Funds from Port's elimination draw will help to purchase specialized beds that each come with a \$10,000 price tag.

Hospital equipment needs to be replaced, on average, every five years and that comes with a

significant price tag, said Welland Hospital Foundation's fund development assistant Lori Potte.

The government provides no funding to purchase equipment, which in turn puts the onus on the foundations, she said.

Welland is currently fundraising for a \$150,000 digital retina camera for

the hospital's ophthalmology unit.

Funds raised during Welland's elimination draw are expected to help with the cost, said Angie Climenhage, operation's manager with the Rose City's foundation.

While donors have expressed concern about where funds would be going following the amal-

gamation, many took comfort in reassurance from staff that donations can still be earmarked for specific communities and programs, she said.

"Our focus is still on raising money for Welland and for regional programs."

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca



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IMPORT DATEBOOK

JANUARY 9
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at Employment Solutions, 9 a.m. to noon, 3 East Main St., Welland, Call 905-788-3751 to reserve your spot.

PASTA NIGHT AT CASA DANTE

Takeout dinners are available for \$8 from 3 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Sauce, meatballs, minestrone soup, and pasta fagioli are also available for takeout.

NIAGARA PROSTATE CANCER

Support Group meets at 7 p.m. at the Canadian Cancer Society office, 45 Humber Dr., St. Catharines. Cancer information plus discussions. Men and women welcome. For more information call 905-934-1685.

ANIME CLUB

at Welland Public Library. Enjoy watching new anime and discussing your favourite manga with friends. This club is recommended for kids aged 12 to 17 and meets 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.



NOTICE: UNCLAIMED BUILDING DEPOSITS 2006 AND PRIOR

Pursuant to Section 4.2.5 of By-Law 6023/129/13 of The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne, any unclaimed building deposits from building permits issued in 2006 and prior will be transferred to the Building Division general funds after ninety (90) days from January 15, 2014 unless proof of claims is made within ninety (90) days from January 15, 2014. The process to claim a building deposit will be detailed in a register letter sent to the last known address of the permit holder and advertisements of the respective permit numbers will be made available on the City's website www.portcolborne.ca and in local press prior too January 15, 2014. Request for payment forms will also be available on the City's website www.portcolborne.ca.

If you require any additional information please contact Lyle Merritt, Chief Building Officer at 905-835-2900 ex 201 or by email at lylemerritt@portcolborne.ca.

Building Permit Numbers:

#2000-2234 - #2004-3274 - #2006-3652 - #2006-3767 - #2006-3775 - #2006-3792 - #2006-3726

JANUARY 11
UKRAINIAN NEW YEAR'S

"Malanka" celebration at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 6:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Dinner/dance featuring the Nultones. Tickets are \$40 each. Call Myron at 905-892-4336.

FAMILY MOVIE

at Diamond Trail branch library, 1 p.m. Alpha and Omega 2: A Howliday Adventure. The movie is rated PG and is fun for the whole family. Tickets are free and can be picked up at the circulation desk. For more information on all programs at the Diamond Trail branch, call 905-322-1061, visit the information desk or visit www.welland.library.on.ca.

JANUARY 12
LEARNING THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF CATS

What do cats want us to know? With humour, candor and intelligence, Dr. Carol Teed, D.V.M., provides insight into modern day feline health and welfare issues and describes how the experiences of a cat are mirrored in our own lives. Dr. Carol Teed graduated from the Atlantic Veterinary College in 1990. She spent most of her twenty-three year career as a veterinarian working in a feline specialty practice. Mon., Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. \$3.00. Books for sale and signing.

Continued on Page 9


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■ **LABOUR:** On strike for two weeks

Red Cross, workers heading to arbitration

DILL SAWCHUK
QMI Agency Niagara

Red Cross in-home personal support workers across Ontario, including about 265 in Niagara-Hamilton, are headed to arbitration after a two-week strike earlier this month.

The workers, who are part of the Service Employees International Union, and Red Cross Care Partners agreed to binding arbitration. They are returning to work, and the two sides are scheduled to meet with the arbitrator Friday.

"We recognize that it has been a challenging time for some of our clients and our families," said Canadian Red Cross spokeswoman Tanya Elliot. "We are relieved and pleased a resolution has been reached for all of our clients."

The personal support workers had been working without a contract since April.

They earn about \$15 an hour. The union said the workers' earning power has been reduced by about 7%

due to wage freezes, inflation and increased gas prices.

"It ended the strike and got the PSWs back with their clients," union president Shaileen Stewart said of the agreement to go to arbitration.

"We see this as a first step for the government mandating home care as an essential service. The strike brought some unexpected awareness as to what PSWs do and the type of services they provide. I think that will help the clients moving forward, and hopefully improve home care as well."

Personal support workers assist clients with a variety of tasks, including bathing, changing clothing and dressings, personal care, moving from wheelchairs to beds and eating. They also perform light housekeeping duties.

Dino Corbi of Niagara Falls is a personal service worker who works out of the St. Catharines office. He crossed the picket line and kept working for the Red Cross in December. The

workers returned to the job Dec. 27.

"For me and other people who decided to work, to know it's been put in an arbitrator's hands, why couldn't that have been done at the beginning?" asked Corbi, who has been with the Red Cross since October.

"There are a lot of my co-workers that aren't happy with me, but my answer is, 'I respected your choice; you should respect mine.'"

"I just did it because people needed to be serviced. I did what I thought was right, which was taking care of the people."

Stewart said crossing the picket line isn't fair to those workers who were on strike and making sacrifices.

While the union never condones people crossing the picket line, Stewart said she also understands why some chose not to take part.

"Some people just couldn't leave their clients," she said. "Others couldn't afford it. Because the wages are so low, the strike put some people in dire straits."



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INPORT DATEBOOK

From Page 6 PORT COLBORNE HISTORICAL

Society meets at 7 p.m. at Portal Village Retirement Home. Local traveller/photographer Rolly Meisel will speak about the Appalachian History Highway. All welcome. For more information call 905-834-4343.

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Work on your latest cardmaking, stamping, papercraft or scrapbooking project at Peihai Public Library, 10-30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Cost \$2.

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session at Employment Solutions, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and at the same hours on Jan. 14 3 East Main St., Welland. Call 905-788-3751 to reserve your spot.

JANUARY 14

THE ABCS OF ANCESTRY

Steve Fulton from the Niagara chapter of the Ontario Genealogical Society will be at Peihai Public Library to show you the

basics of using Ancestry.com. An ancestry representative will answer questions and provide tips through Skype. Time 6:30 p.m. Bring your own laptop, if possible. Cost \$3. Register ahead.

NIAGARA SECULAR

Humanists invite everybody to their monthly meeting at 7 p.m., Unitarian Congregation building, 223 Church St., St. Catharines, next to Delta Bingo. Prof. Monika Havelka from University of Toronto will speak on evolution and related topics, with a Q&A period to follow. NSH members no charge, visitors \$4. Contact hklau58@gmail.com for more info and to RSVP or visit <http://nsh.humanists.ca>.

JANUARY 15

FIRST AID, CPR, AED

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WELLAND HORTICULTURAL

Society monthly meeting, 7 p.m. at Wesley United Church, 244 First Ave., Welland. Darren Schmahli speaks about fundamentals of

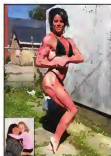
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■ **SPORTS:** Pirates welcome back captain

John DiLorenzo feeling '100%'

The new year started much better than the old one ended for John DiLorenzo.

While the Port Colborne Pirates captain didn't end Thursday night

in the winner's circle, nor get his name on the scoresheet, he at least was able to play a full game in the junior B hockey team's 5-1 road loss, and for the first time in

more than a month, he felt good on the ice.

"It felt really good to be back," the 17-year-old Port Colborne native said after his second game

back in the lineup after missing five weeks with an "upper-body injury."

That's a far cry from the stay-at-home defenceman's return to the lineup a week ago. DiLorenzo only played 10 minutes Dec. 27 against the Niagara Falls Canucks before a puck to the face knocked him out of the game.

"It's healing quite nicely," he said of a cut that required 10 stitches.

DiLorenzo's injuries were among that depleted the team's defensive corps and have hurt the Don Cherry's Pirates overall this season. After a promising start in which they earned 11 of 20 points, Port Colborne has gone 2-19-0-1 over the past 23 games. Often, the losses came in the latter stages of games, after the three to four blue-liners were zapped of energy.

DiLorenzo said the rash of injuries to the defense has contributed greatly to the Pirates' struggles.

"It's something we've been battling all year. There has been a carousel of defencemen in and out of the lineup."

He suggested Port Colborne, which came into the 2013-14 season with high expectations after placing second in the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League's Golden Horseshoe Conference, has also been a "little snakebit" when it comes to getting bounces in front of the net.

"Nobody can put their finger on it, but we've just not getting the bounces. Nothing's been going our way."

Despite the team's struggles of late, DiLorenzo said there's been no talk in the dressing room about dismissing this season as a rebuilding year and lowering expectations for finishing the season on a winning note and making noise in the playoffs.

"We've got a great group of guys who



JOHN DILorenzo

never quit, and players are starting to come back. Everybody came into the season expecting to win, and we still expect to win."

"There are a lot of 20-year-olds on this team who won't be satisfied if you don't finish strong."

While the injury kept DiLorenzo out of the lineup, that was only for games and practices. He was there whenever the team got together, and he said his absence on the ice as Port Colborne's captain didn't create a leadership void.

"There are a lot of good leaders on this team."

Though he was eager to get back on the active roster, DiLorenzo didn't rush his return from the injury and, as a result, isn't favouring the part of his body that was hurt.

"I knew when I came back I was 100%.

So I didn't really worry about it. I feel I'm playing really well right now."

The Pirates, who fell to a 2-4 head-to-head play with Thorold following Thursday's loss, hosted the Buffalo Regals Friday night at Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

Port Colborne came into the game with an 8-23-0-2 record and lead 1-32-0-1 Buffalo by 15 points in the Golden Horseshoe Conference standings. The Pirates, however, so far have been the only team to lose to the Regals this season. Buffalo, then known as the Blades, also defeated the Pirates for its only win of the 2012-13 season, DiLorenzo's first with the team.

"It's one of those things. They come in ready to play us."

He also said the Regals are "much better than their record."

"I think people really underestimate them. They've been in most of their games this year, and they haven't been blown away all that often."

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■ CONDUCTED ENERGY WEAPONS

Police want more Tasers; some question cost

BILL SAWCHUK
QMI Agency/Niagara

Beyond dollars and cents, Tasers — or what police refer to as conducted energy weapons — are a matter of life and death, Niagara Police Chief Jeff McGuire says.

"In our opinion, it is really quite simple, a conducted energy weapon in the hands of a properly trained police officer, with proper steps of accountability in place and good supervision, is going to save lives," McGuire said.

"If hand-to-hand combat didn't work, and pepper spray didn't work, and you are fighting for your life, it gives the officer an opportunity to de-escalate a situation without having to elevate to the level of having to shoot someone."

After a bruising battle, Niagara Region council agreed to add \$670,000 back into the police budget recently, the exact estimated cost to buy stun guns for all front-line NRP officers.

A final plan to buy stun guns

will be presented in January to the police board, which can approve or reject it.

In Hamilton, the police service faced for \$992,462 to equip all front-line officers with conducted energy weapons.

However, a report to the police services board recommended a plan to purchase fewer devices, which will be in a pool and signed out.

The report said this will help minimize costs and help ensure that as technology changes, the devices are more easily upgraded.

West Lincoln Mayor Doug Joyner said there are still questions that need to be answered in Niagara about the cost and the need for a Taser in the hand of every front-line NRP officer. The NRP deployed Tasers 19 times in 2012 and 27 times in 2011.

"In my mind, the chief needs to justify if every front-line officer needs one," Joyner said. "What they are saying is when they go out on a shift, they are going to grab their pepper

spray, grab a flashlight. They are going to grab some handcuffs. They are going to grab a Taser. I don't know that it is necessary that each front-line officer have one. Certain people on that platoon have them and I think that's good enough."

The NRP has 60 conducted energy weapons for its specialized units and uniformed supervisors.

The Taser incapacitates a victim using an electric shock, which disrupts the brain's signals causing pain and muscle contractions. Most victims fall down, which is why officers use them in altercations.

Tasers have an "on-board" computer chip that records the date and time whenever the trigger is pulled. Some models record how long the trigger was depressed.

On Aug. 27, the province announced it would allow the use of Tasers by front-line officers. The province didn't, however, provide any funding.

See TASERS, Page 16



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Police chief believes stun guns should be purchased

From Page 13

McGuire said since provincial

policy now allows police forces to deploy stun guns, he believes

they should be purchased. The plan would be to equip 300 addi-

tional officers with the stun guns.

"The more coverage we have, the better," McGuire said. "If you look at the stats, there isn't a large number of uses. In a per-

fect world, we would have them at every call."

Because of the change in provincial policy, McGuire said there could be liability issues if an officer used a firearm

when no Taser was available.

"I think it is reasonable to expect the board may be in a position to defend itself... if a situation escalated to lethal force.

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Unfortunately mixing alcohol with certain types of prescription medications can be dangerous. Alcohol can increase the risk of severe CNS depression when taken with opioids, benzodiazepines and barbiturates. Alcohol can also affect drug metabolism (breakdown to active components), or the absorption of some drugs. Chronic alcohol intake can also cause problems with certain medications because of the effect it has on the liver and specific drug metabolizing enzymes.

Chronic alcohol use increases acetaminophen (TYPHENOL) metabolism increasing its conversion to metabolites toxic to the liver. It is always best not to exceed four grams of acetaminophen a day, especially if you are a heavy or binge drinker because of the damage it can do to your liver.

Chronic alcohol use along with NSAIDs (Ibuprofen) or aspirin can increase the risk of GI bleeds. However, an occasional drink with NSAID use is not likely an issue.

If you are a patient on warfarin alcohol can inhibit warfarin metabolism and increase your INR. If you change your usual alcohol intake you should have your INR checked.

Certain antibiotics, and in particular metronidazole, has the potential when mixed with alcohol to make people quite ill. When taken together a patient may experience low blood pressure, shortness of breath, facial flushing, and nausea.

Diabetic patients taking hypoglycemics such as GLYBURIDE or insulin are at risk of severe hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) when they drink alcohol. These patients should limit alcohol to an occasional single drink.

Any patient on medication for sleeping should be careful of alcohol consumption because of the additive effects of drowsiness and respiratory depression. Patients have been known to aspirate their own vomit and die from intoxication. This could be more likely to happen if a person mixes alcohol with their sleep medication.

This same problem could exist when patients mix alcohol and opiates.

It is always wise to consult your pharmacist or physician if you receive a new prescription and intend to have a few alcoholic beverages. Also please notify your physician or pharmacist if you are a chronic drinker. Even if you are not planning to drink while taking your prescription previous liver damage could affect how well you metabolize your medication. This could result in too high, or too low a dose for you.

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STUDENT SNAPSHOT: JOSEPH

With a keen interest in sports, Joseph challenges himself by playing basketball, volleyball, soccer and track. Although he has a number of athletic pursuits, being in high school has also helped Joseph find some new interests.

Eventually, Joseph says he'd like to make some good money by playing professional sports. But failing that, he'd also be happy to get into engineering.

It's a good thing for Joseph that DSBN high schools offer everything from arts programs to science and technology, including 40 Specialist High Skills Majors in 13 different economic sectors. This way, no matter which interest Joseph decides to pursue, there will be courses and programs to match his needs.

GET IN THE GAME!

From aquatics to wrestling and everything in between, DSBN schools offer 24 types of different sports at both the recreational and competitive levels.



At the DSBN, your learning opportunities are almost limitless.

Our schools offer a wide variety of courses, programs, clubs, athletics and extra-curricular experiences to suit every student's particular interests.

WHAT ARE MY OPPORTUNITIES?

WANT HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE?

Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) are programs that help students put a laser-like focus on their learning. These programs allow students to concentrate their education in a specific economic sector and help prepare them for college, university, apprenticeship or the workplace. SHSMs allow students to gain unique insight into their chosen career path, as well as many industry specific qualifications and certifications.

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STUDENT SNAPSHOT: DUAN



"I really think it's important to have a well rounded experience in school," says Duan, whose high school experience has already led him to a job in his chosen career sector.

Now that he's in Grade 11 and taking more elective courses, Duan has the opportunity to pursue all of his other interests and explore new thoughts and ideas.

"There are so many different courses and clubs you can choose from, it's great. Plus, everyone I've met has been so supportive," said Duan.

STUDENT SNAPSHOT: JESSICA

Now in Grade 10, Jessica says the experiences she's had in high school have opened her eyes to a whole range of different career paths.

"Being focused on the arts, I thought I only had a couple options available to me. At first I figured I would pursue either acting or singing, but now I see all the possibilities that exist."

She added, "High school has been great for me. I'm getting the chance to experiment with so many new things and all my friends and teachers are so supportive, I couldn't imagine being anywhere else."

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

What you want to learn in school will be influenced by what you want to do afterward. You may have a specific career in mind, or you may have a general area of interest. Wherever you want to go, a good plan will form the foundation of your future success.

Of course, you won't be alone on this journey.

Our schools take great pride in supporting you and your family each step of the way. You'll be able to rely on your teachers and your school's guidance department as important resources. We'll be happy to work with you on creating an educational plan designed to meet your particular needs and help you achieve your future goals.

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